

Transcript of Student Town Hall Meeting for the University of South Carolina School of Law
July 30, 2020

00:00:00

MODERATOR: Good evening from the University of South Carolina School of Law and thank you for joining us for our student town hall.

This event will last about an hour, and will cover the School of Law's COVID-19 mitigation efforts and the plan to safely reopen for the fall semester.

My Name is Rob Schaller, and I'll be your moderator this evening.

Our presenters are Dean Rob Wilcox, Dean Elect William Hubbard, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Susan Kuo, Associate Dean for Student Affairs Susan Palmer, Assistant Dean for Admissions Karen Britton.

For those of you submitting questions this evening, please use the Q&A feature. We will get to as many questions as we can during this time.

Video and audio delays are possible during this event so please bear with us.

We're glad you're here and we look forward to tonight's discussion.

Without further ado, I will turn the meeting over to Dean Wilcox.

00:01:06

DEAN WILCOX: Welcome to tonight's student town hall. We have been receiving your questions and hope tonight to answer many of them. We are today three weeks from the start of classes and it's important for you to have the information you need to be confident that this semester will offer both safety and quality. Tonight's program is being recorded in case you want to refer back to any part of it.

Let me begin by addressing the health safety issue and sharing with you my confidence that the university and the law school have done an excellent job of mitigating risk within the building and on campus. Safety has been the first priority of every decision this summer.

Fortunately, the university has excellent student health services and has been able to draw not only on the advice of the CDC and state health officials, but also on the expertise of faculty in medicine, public health, pharmacy, and nursing.

That expertise, and consistent planning since spring, have given the university the ability to reopen for classes on August 20, we believe without undue risk to students, faculty, and staff or to the Columbia community.

We have to be realistic -- and understand that even great planning does not mean that there won't be a spike when so many people return to campus -- but the planning has reassured the university that the risk is a manageable risk and that, if people do get sick, they can be cared for within available capacities.

That does not mean this semester will look like the old normal. I can assure you the differences you experience will be far more than just having to wear a face covering. We will have to fundamentally change our behavior patterns and how we interact with one another.

Ten to 14 days before you arrive on campus, you should get a COVID test. Since you are not living on campus as law students, a test is not required, but it is strongly recommended -- not only for your health but for the health of others around you.

And the 10 to 14-day lead time hopefully allows you time to get test results back and to even recover before school starts in the event of a positive test.

You can get a test wherever you live -- many pharmacies have them available, or you may have local health organizations offering tests. If you are in Columbia, go to the university's COVID page and you can sign up for testing on campus many days in August. I recommend you also check on insurance and be sure it covers any cost of the test you are getting.

When you get a result, we ask that you go online at the university student health services page and go to your My Health Space page -- you may already have gone there to provide immunization information -- go to medical clearances and upload your test results.

Each day before you come to campus, take your temperature. If you have a fever of 100 or higher -- or if you have symptoms of COVID, don't come to school that day.

During the semester, if you test positive, we ask that you let student health know and you will be required to isolate -- probably for 14 days -- at home. If you can't isolate at home, the university does have some isolation space available on campus.

When the university is notified of a positive test, they work with that person to provide contact tracing. Our classroom distancing is designed to protect you as best as possible if a classmate should become positive. Just being in the classroom with someone who tests positive may not require that you isolate. It's a function of time and distance that matters. But if you become aware that you have been exposed to a person who tests positive or are notified by a contact tracer that you have been sufficiently exposed in close quarters to someone who is positive, you also will likely have to quarantine for some period of time until you are cleared.

As I will discuss shortly, you will be able to attend all of your classes electronically during that period.

When you get to campus, you must have a face covering – we will provide one on opening day if you don't have one. Put it on before you come in the building and plan to wear it all the time in the building. Faculty and staff will be covered as well, with a mask or cloth covering or with a plastic shield or both.

We have done a lot in the building to protect you as well.

Hand sanitizer stations are located throughout the building, and there is an incredible amount of custodial care throughout the day, cleaning surfaces in the public areas of the building.

Because classrooms will need to be thoroughly cleaned at night and made ready for the next morning, we cannot allow students to study in those rooms after they have been closed in the evening.

Seating in the building is socially distanced to 6 feet of separation, including in the classrooms. Most stairwells are now one-way stairs so that when you use a stairwell, you do not have oncoming contact with others. Elevators have a capacity now of two people standing in opposite corners. And classes have been scheduled to cut the scheduled population in the building at any one time in half to reduce and eliminate congestion.

Our building ventilation refreshes the air several times per day and we are assured we meet all CDC and DHEC air quality guidelines. We benefit from having an HVAC system that is almost brand new.

1Ls, for the most part, with a very few exceptions for one course, will not change classrooms during the morning. Your seat will be your seat all morning every morning. When the 1Ls finish class at 1:00 pm, the rooms will be cleaned, and the upper level students will have class from 2:00 on. Because upper-level students will change classes, you will need to wipe your desk and chair when you come into the room and when you leave. The sanitizers will be on the tables.

Classes will have 20 minutes between them instead of the old 10 minutes, so classes meet at different start times than last year.

Normally we would urge everyone to stay and study in the law school all day, but with distancing, this is one of the big changes.

You will have access to the building all day with your Carolina Card, and you will have access to printers and copiers, but there will be limited seating, with only about 90 seats in the library. And group study rooms will become individual study spaces for the most part.

We have been able to add to the study areas by converting the event space into a study hall with distanced seating and wired tables. We also have developed 4 or 5 group study spaces in the Children's Law Center about a block away, which can be reserved for study groups of 2 or 4

people. We will add some space during the day by allowing study in some empty classrooms during the day, but again, not at night in classrooms, so that they can be cleaned. By October we will add a study hall across the street in the old church that we own – but before we can do that, we have to install Wi-Fi there.

Because of cleaning needs, the library will be open each night only until 8, but you can get in the building later than that to use other study areas and for printer access in the student commons. Also, the library itself will be closed on Saturday and Sundays, at least at the outset of the semester. Again, that does not mean the entire building is closed on the weekends.

We know that some of you may encounter significant internet access issues at home. If so, you need to let us know. We hope to be able to reserve some of the in-building study areas for those with severe technology issues at home.

We initially designed the course schedule to avoid breaks between 1l classes and to avoid people having an in-person class up against an online class. As things have changed and more courses have gone online over the summer, some of you may need a study space here between classes or a place to take a class online between two in person classes. We are aware and will do our best to work that out, but first we have to know exactly which classes are on-line.

That brings us to classes.

We put the schedule together to try and provide 1ls with as much in –person instruction as possible within safety constraints. The good news is that you will have smaller sections than any other 1l class in the past 50 years. But a key component of the year ahead is that both faculty and students can opt for online instruction and we do not ask why.

As COVID has spiked in recent weeks, we know that some faculty are now likely to move from in-classroom delivery to on-line delivery for at least the first part of the semester – so that is still in flux. Faculty have until August 10 to change their mind, so I cannot assure you the delivery method of each of your courses until then – but things are trending to more online courses at this point.

1ls will have most classes in the morning to accommodate in-classroom instruction, if possible, with an afternoon on-line course.

At 1:00 each day the 1ls will be out of the classrooms and the upper-level students arrive for afternoon classes, although some or many of those afternoon upper-level afternoon courses may also move online by August 10.

Several key things to keep in mind:

- 1) Every class that is offered in a classroom will also be available for online participation in a synchronous format. So, if you are not comfortable being in person in class for health reasons, or if you are too sick to come in, you can attend on-line using blackboard

collaborate. Also, if faculty become ill, they may have to move to an online delivery from their home.

We will not require a reason for choosing to attend online, but we will require that you comply with the attendance policy whether online or in the classroom.

2) What does on-line mean and what does synchronous mean?

For classes that are being offered in a live classroom, synchronous online means you attend the course electronically at the same time it is offered in the classroom on the course schedule – and you will be expected to participate and answer questions online just as if you were in the classroom.

For classes offered 100% online, such as all morning upper-level classes, most of them also will be synchronous on-line attended at the time on the schedule and including your participation. A few will be asynchronous, meaning that you can attend at another time during the day – but we expect asynchronous offerings to be more the exception than the rule.

Some courses may be a hybrid. Due to classroom capacity limits, PPR may have part of its instruction delivered online and part delivered to you, one day a week for example, in class.

This means, you cannot plan to do something else all day and watch videos at night. Your attendance in a synchronous class will be based on your being in attendance during the scheduled live class period.

However, all classes will be recorded in case you are too ill to attend and need to watch a class later – but that still counts as an absence.

Your exams will all be administered remotely in December. I hope we will be able to allow some of you to take exams on your computer here at the school to give you a quiet space and good technology. But that will depend upon whether the university allows students on campus at all after thanksgiving. We will if we can.

All courses other than those that always are pass/fail, will have letter grades. We changed in the spring to pass/fail for the semester because of the disruption caused by the unexpected mid-semester move on-line, but now there is plenty of notice and time to plan and we will grade on a normal scale.

I know some of you have asked about tuition. I do not anticipate that tuition will change. If you pay a parking fee and the university closes, the unused part of the fee will be refunded as in the spring. But otherwise fees and tuition are not likely to change. That is a university decision, not in our control, but I do not anticipate that the university will adjust tuition. Regardless of the delivery method, you will receive the value you deserve for your investment.

You may well be wondering what would cause the entire university to go 100% on-line. The university has a plan for that decision if conditions warrant. It depends on a variety of safety factors, including the ability to handle anyone who gets sick and the threat of the campus to the community health and vice-versa. Our own behavior may end up being a huge factor in whether the health situation improves or gets worse. Be assured that President Caslen is ready to make that decision if conditions warrant.

00:26:17

Obviously, the changes I've talked about this semester are significant, but there also changes that are going to have an impact on other aspects of your student life including campus interviewing and orientation and student organizations. So, let me bring at this point Associate Dean Susan Palmer, our dean of students, in to talk about how student life will be affected this semester. Dean Palmer.

00:26:43

DEAN PALMER: Thank you, Dean Wilcox. First, to the members of our newest class, the law class of 2023, congratulations and welcome. We're looking forward to having you with us in a few short weeks. I absolutely promise you will have a challenging and a rewarding three years ahead. Orientation has been organized this year to respect best practices for distancing. You should have seen an overview of orientation in the sidebar posted by the admissions office this week. Because small groups will be in different sessions at different times during orientation, you will have individual schedules for your small peer mentor group. If you don't know this already, peer mentors are second year students who will help introduce you to the law school community and to what law school is like, and you will hear from your peer mentors once section assignments are final next Tuesday.

Just as in the upcoming semester you will have both in person and online classes and Academic Success workshops during orientation, so you'll become familiar with the format of both. Other components of orientation will take place via technology. Some will be hosted by your peer mentors, staff, and faculty. Others will be self-paced. It is a different format from our usual as are so many things these days, but we are absolutely confident in the quality of the academic preparation and the opportunities orientation will offer to get to know our community.

Watch the class of 2023 Facebook page and your email for a request to submit a photo or 140 characters about yourself for an online 1L viewbook, so that you can get to know your classmates before orientation and I will see you on Monday, August 17th.

2Ls and 3Ls, we've missed you, really. I wish I were in a room talking with you right now. Many of you have asked about what the season recruiting will look like this fall. Career services has been talking with employers all through the spring in the summer. Most of them tell us they plan to defer interviews and hiring until the spring. For those that want to interview this fall we will accommodate any employer that wants to come on campus to interview as long as they

agree to follow the university's distancing, face covering, and wellness check protocols for visitors.

We will work with our IT staff to facilitate any employer who wishes to conduct virtual interviews and we have several firms that have already scheduled those. We will continue to post jobs and to collect and forward resumes for any employer who to screen applicants and invite them to their office for interviews.

We of course are hopeful that by the spring semester things will be back to more nearly normal and OCIs can begin again. The most important thing my Career Services colleagues want to tell you is that you should reach out to us in Career Services to talk with us about your individual job search plan timing and search methods. Methods always will vary with the type of job you seek and with the market you are in. Counselors will be available, and we encourage you to schedule virtual appointments just as you always have using simplicity. We plan to have the office staffed in person every day that classes are in session.

You've also asked about student organization meetings and use of the building. You've already heard from Dean Wilcox that classes will be closed for cleaning between the end of the 1L class day at 1:00 o'clock and the start of the afternoon session at 2:00, and once again once the class day is over. Because classroom availability will be so limited, the default position for general body meeting should be meeting virtually. IT can provide tech support if you're using one of the university approved platforms like Teams or Webex. We support student organizations that want to have speakers or panel programs virtually. If you want to have guest speakers in person, you will need to meet with Jacob or Heather in Student Affairs in advance to make sure that your guest understands all the universities requirements for visitors. You may elect to have events off campus but please remember that we will have students who will want to be able to participate in everything law school has to offer remotely, and you'll want to use technology to include them. And whatever you're presenting, we will also expect you to respect the rules of the host venue, to follow the pledge in the I Pledge Columbia compact and to be responsible members of our profession that we know you are.

And by the way if you haven't seen the I Pledge Columbia campaign I recommend it to you. It's on the university's COVID19 website. Its goal is to build a campus culture committed to following health protocols responsibly, and I encourage you to join me and Dean Wilcox in taking the pledge.

Food. You've all asked about food. We are waiting to hear from the university whether the Counselor's Cafe will be open. If it does open it almost certainly will be limited to a grab and go set up. You are still able to eat in the café. Seating has been rearranged to respect distancing guidelines. You can eat in the courtyard and you will see some new picnic tables and benches around the law school in some shady places. Food will not be permitted in the classrooms or other spaces in the law school. Pantries have been closed and high touch spaces like refrigerators and microwaves will not be available. So, this is a great time to invest in a good insulated lunch bag or containers.

Dean Wilcox, I think that covers the most frequent questions we have been asked. Thank you.

00:32:18

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Palmer, thank you very much for that. I think now we have some time for some questions and so I turned it back to Rob Schaller. Rob, do you have a question for us?

00:32:29

MODERATOR: Yes, the first question comes from Anonymous, who asks if we want to start the semester and do orientation online, will we be able to do so?

00:32:41

DEAN WILCOX: Let me answer that question and the answer is yes. You may miss out on some opportunities of where orientation gives you a chance to meet some of your new colleagues but certainly you should feel free to do it online if you feel that is safer for you and we will respect that choice. If you wish to start online and give it an experience and see what you like, you could still join the rest of things in person later. If you wish to start in person and you are not comfortable with things you can certainly switched online. So, there's really maximum flexibility at that point. But what I do ask that students not do though is just on a day-to-day basis, they get up in the morning and decide not to come in or to come in. But if you really feel like it's a decision you want to make to be online, you can do that for orientation and other things as well. Thank you. Next question, Rob.

00:33:44

MODERATOR: Our next question comes from SDP, who asks how will classrooms be cleaned and what type of cleaners will be used?

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DEAN WILCOX: You are probably going a little bit beyond my knowledge in terms of the exact chemicals we're using. I will tell you that the university has certainly invested in cleaners that are deemed to meet all of the requirements of the various health authorities. They provide those materials to us, so everything has been certified, if you will, by the university's purchase of it, as a suitable cleaner and all the spaces will be wiped down. The floors are regularly cleaned on a daily basis. Tables and chairs will be wiped down with those various cleaners, but I couldn't tell you the exact chemical content. Thank you. Another question?

00:34:41

MODERATOR: A follow-up question from SDP is how will locker areas be managed?

00:34:47

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Palmer, you want to take a shot at lockers?

00:34:52

DEAN PALMER: There, I need to need to unmute myself for a second. Lockers will be available. They will be assigned to 1st year students, and second- and third-year students can request a locker like last year. But you know, obviously, what the locker set up is like. Everybody is very close together and so we will ask you to just be very conscious of the need to maintain distancing while you're in the locker area. And if I may add onto that the first year students will be in the same classroom essentially all morning, and so you may not need to run back and forth to the lockers that much as a first year student and we just ask that you have common courtesy if the person next to your locker is getting their books out of the locker that you just wait in the hall for a moment. One of the reasons we have 20 minutes between classes is to give you that flexibility to not jam the restrooms, not jam the locker areas, but just use some common courtesy. That will go a long way. Thank you, Rob.

00:35:51

MODERATOR: Our next question comes from Anonymous: What will be the protocol for a student to catch up if they contract COVID and are indeed asymptomatic?

00:36:02

DEAN WILCOX: The catch up will be twofold. First of all, if they are unable to attend the classes or watch the classes while they are in quarantine because of the illness, we will treat it as we would any illness that might occur in other times, whether you had the flu or pneumonia or whatever. If you fall behind your faculty are going to work with you to catch up and if you fall sufficiently far behind that we have to delay exams or something for you that certainly can be done as well. Our hope that we basically will apply the same rules there that we've applied for any health issue in the normal time. The main difference this year is if you are asymptomatic but have to quarantine or if your symptoms are relatively mild, you may be able to attend class. You would have the opportunity to attend class certainly electronically during that period which would keep you from falling as far behind as you might otherwise. So, we think in some ways, we will be better suited to handle that long term illness than we would have been in past semesters, but otherwise deal with it that way. Dean Kuo, is there anything more that you'd like to add to that? I got a thumbs up from her, I think we're good, Rob.

00:37:23

MODERATOR: Our next question comes from Morgan Spires, who asks: Can you please elaborate how social distancing guidelines will be implemented in journal offices, specifically how will individual offices within the journal rooms be treated?

00:37:38

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Palmer, can you add something on that please?

00:37:43

DEAN PALMER: There are folks in the law school who have been responsible for going into rooms over the summer and assessing what the capacity of those rooms are and marking them up. When you come back you will find a sign on each of those small offices and on the common space in your journal offices limiting the capacity. And I think you'll find that the small offices in

the journals are going to be one person offices. There will be a little bit of a change there, Morgan. Offices that may have had three occupants are only going to be able to have one at the time and they're going to need to clean up after somebody uses it before the next person comes in. Also, the journals that have pantries: Your pantries are going to be closed just like all the other pantries around the campus. So, you need to plan for as well. Rob?

00:38:33

MODERATOR: Our next question is from Anonymous who asks: Considering first year students will be having classes with the same small group of students every day, does the law school have any plans to help first year students meet more of their classmates?

00:38:48

DEAN WILCOX: Again, I'm going to turn it over to Dean Palmer. She has been working on that very issue.

00:38:53

DEAN PALMER: Yes, we started with the email or the prompt you're going to see on social media to do that 1L Facebook entry. We hope that's going to be searchable so you can look for all of the other people who went to Clemson or all of the other people who are from Delaware. Anything that interests you about your classmates. The photos we've asked you to submit, they need to be decent, but they can be as informal as you like. We want them to be reflective of your personality. We've given a chance to tell the community a little bit about yourself, so there your peer mentors are going to be a very important part of that socialization. They are well aware that this is so different from most school's orientation where we are all in a big group over and over and over and so just naturally you get to know other people. Your Student Bar Association has all kinds of ideas for virtual happy hours and bingo games and all kinds of other things. You are a social media generation and this is one time that I think we embrace and celebrate that because this is going to give you an opportunity to connect with people even when you can't all be crowded together in a noisy venue having fun. So, there will be very deliberate opportunities created to try to let you have that kind of chance to socialize and get to know your classmates. But you also need to come to us with those kinds of ideas. We don't want to impose a bunch of mandatory fun on you. You are going to have some good ideas about the things that you want to do, and you've got a very active and engaged Student Bar Association. You'll have class representatives and they're going to be a great liaison between the student body and student affairs in the rest of the law school. That's what they are there for and we're looking forward to helping you put it all together.

00:40:51

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Kuo, would you like to mention a little bit. I know there's some faculty efforts along that same line to engage students outside of class. Maybe talk a little bit about what the faculty efforts in that regard are?

00:41:04

DEAN KUO: So, faculty have been talking about ways to create study rooms and chat rooms using Blackboard Collaborate. So, I think Dean Moore and I have exchanged in communications about the possibility of doing this. I'll add that one of the student organizations is not an official student organization, it's the Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force that has assisted me in my role as the associate dean for diversity and inclusion has created some Instagram feeds for posting pictures of pets. Pictures of things you've cooked, things that things you've done like entertainment suggestions. So other ways to interact with other students as well as faculty and staff. So, there are plans in the works and we'd also like to hear your ideas as well. I mean you guys know you better than we know you, so when you have ideas for bringing us together and in promoting that interaction.

00:42:01

DEAN WILCOX: You're breaking up a little bit on us there at the and I would say when we talk about a small class, we're still talking about having 35 students in a class. We're not talking on 10 or 12. Some of you may be in a class as large as about 50 but most of you will be in the range of about 35, so you will get to know some people in there as well. Rob, next question.

00:42:22

MODERATOR: Our next question comes from Logan who wants to know is there a clinic orientation scheduled during 1L orientation?

00:42:32

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Kuo, do you know the answer to that question. I'm not sure if I know the specific answer or not.

DEAN KUO: Off the top of my head, I think that might be so. At least I've heard, I think I've heard, of other students telling me but I do not know from the clinical faculty yet either so will have to find out about those schedules. If you're enrolled in a clinical course, you should hear from your faculty members about orientation. Thank you.

00:43:05

DEAN WILCOX: And Logan, we will get the answer to that specific question. We will get the answers to all these questions and come and post them on our FAQ page that we're putting together for our COVID page and let you now as soon as we get with Director Cherry of the Clinics and get that answered for you. But thank you for that question. Rob Schaller?

00:43:25

MODERATOR: Yes, Sir. Carolina cards are not being dispersed until the week of August 17th (I called Russell House this morning to confirm). How should we enter the law school building to buy books?

00:43:39

DEAN WILCOX: That is a good question and I think the best answer unless Dean Palmer has an answer is that we will come up with an answer to that very good question. That probably is

something that we have not answered And if you will, look for an answer to that on the FAQ Page. We will be sure to get that up. I appreciate you bringing it to our attention because that's maybe one we overlooked. Thank you.

00:44:01

MODERATOR: Anonymous asks: Are students allowed to wear face shields instead of masks?

00:44:07

DEAN WILCOX: Yes. The brief answer that is any suitable face covering, whether it is a clear plastic shield or a mask or a cloth covering their face, all of those are satisfactory. The faculty and staff have plastic masks that come from the bottom up that rest on your shoulders and go up, but you can also get a mask that you wear on your forehead goes down. Those will all be suitable. Thank you.

00:44:35

MODERATOR: Morgan Spires asks: Will student organizations be able to use university funding to pay for off-campus events so long as we follow the social distancing guidelines of our host venue?

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DEAN WILCOX: I know when to ask Dean Palmer for advice. Dean Palmer can I handle that one good question? Those rules have not changed Morgan. You're welcome to use university funds for organization activities subject to all of the same rules you always did, but yes, we do ask that you follow the protocols. Rob?

00:45:11

MODERATOR: Anna V. asks: For the online classes in the afternoon, how is it being insured that there is as much communication between the professor and the students in comparison to an in-person class?

00:45:24

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Kuo, do you want to talk a little bit about how Blackboard Collaborate works there?

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DEAN KUO: Blackboard Collaborate will allow your faculty member to teach both to the students in person but also to anyone who might be on line at the same time so you can post questions and you can engage with the class and the professor in the same way that you would engage in class. You just won't be physically in the class and while I have the mic, I wanted to add that Romona Keith, Ms. Romona Keith, our law school registrar, tells me that an orientation will take place for our clinical students during 1L orientation. I thank you for both questions.

00:46:08

DEAN WILCOX: Yes, to go back to the original question: This is not the equivalent of like a Panopto lecture that gets recorded. This is going to be very much an interactive experience where the student is able to ask questions and be able to be called on to answer questions and to see the class as it is ongoing and to be a part of the class so we hope the experience will be very good but I've seen a lot of training going on this summer and I think faculty are in a completely different spot than they were when they were thrust into this with one week's notice in March. Next question, Rob.

00:46:47

MODERATOR: Yes. Anonymous asks: Last semester we were given an extra hour on our exams. Will it be the same this semester?

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DEAN WILCOX: Dean Kuo, I don't know if we have the answer to that yet, but I'll turn it over to you.

00:47:03

DEAN KUO: We actually have not addressed that yet within the Academic Affairs office, but it is something we will discuss and given the technological concerns that I know that many of you have, I think that is likely the outcome, but give us a chance to have a discussion right internally, but also with colleagues. So, thank you. We will not forget. That is on my list of things to do. Thank you.

00:47:28

DEAN WILCOX: Next question, Rob.

00:47:31

MODERATOR: Anonymous asks: Will additional spaces be opened up in an online course that are currently at capacity?

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DEAN WILCOX: Dean Kuo, I think that falls squarely in your world. You're muted.

00:47:50

DEAN KUO: Am I back? Sorry about that. So, I know that this is a hard one because you're looking and thinking the class is online so there should be space. But we won't be adding seats just because the class is offered online. A decision to add class seats is subject to the usual hardship petition process and we have been looking at the hardship petitions over the summer and while physical space is certainly an important concern when making these kinds of determinations, faculty pedagogical concerns also drive these decisions. So please do submit your hardship petitions but simply because the class is being offered online, doesn't mean that there isn't still a capacity concern. Thank you.

00:48:38

DEAN WILCOX: Thank you much. Next question.

00:48:40

MODERATOR: We've had a couple of questions actually that are regarding the ability to meet in person versus online. Will that be an option or if everything will need to be via Teams or some other virtual avenue?

00:48:56

DEAN WILCOX: Is this with regards student groups?

MODERATOR: This was in regard to meeting with faculty, I believe.

00:49:03

DEAN WILCOX: I think the answer with faculty meetings outside of class is that I think you're going to see a lot of electronic office hours, but faculty are also looking at ways to meet with students in person. But the difficulty there is the spacing. If you maybe can have a student in your office but it's relatively small quarters and so some faculty are looking at the idea in good weather using the courtyard perhaps as a place where they could meet students outside of the classroom. By trying to find the right locations to where everybody is comfortable that they're not being put together into smaller spaces. So, I think there is some faculty willingness to do that if the conditions could be found but otherwise, I think they're going to be very generous in the availability electronically for meetings with students. In fact, I think that's one of the changes that COVID is going to bring to education generally is that access to faculty through online office hours is probably something that is here to stay even after COVID. Another question.

00:50:07

MODERATOR: We have time for just a few more questions. The first one is from Anonymous: Will we be required to have a webcam?

00:50:16

DEAN WILCOX: You do need a webcam. If you have a problem with that aspect, let us know, but our recommendation certainly is that for you to have the full experience of the class, we really think it's going to be best for you to have a webcam and to have a microphone and what you just need to know is that one will be required so you should be able to get it if you're using student aid and things. You should be able to, I think, purchase that just like you can purchase your computer. But it is a problem Just please let us know and we'll try to work with you. We don't want you stand on law school because the lack of a webcam.

00:50:58

MODERATOR: Our next question is from Anonymous: Has the faculty considered raising the median GPA to help all students and especially those that will not perform at the level they would under normal conditions?

00:51:14

DEAN WILCOX: I would say you should come on the expectation that the curves are going to be the same that they have been. I won't say that faculty could not possibly change their mind on that as we move forward, but I think you need to anticipate that they will be the same. Our view is that you're getting a similar experience and we're going to try very hard to work with you to make sure that you have the same opportunity to excel online that you would have having been in person and if we discovered that conditions are different than we anticipated, one thing we I think we showed last spring is we can be flexible when we discover that. But right now, you should have just the curves being on the same scale as normal. You have one more question for us?

00:52:03

MODERATOR: Yes, we have a few. Anonymous asks if we will not be attending orientation, will our Carolina cards be sent to us?

00:52:15

DEAN WILCOX: Dean Palmer can you make sure that happens?

00:52:19

DEAN PALMER: I will make sure that happens. That's one we had not thought of. Thank you.

00:52:24

DEAN WILCOX: That's why we ask these questions. Because the number of details to make this happen have been immense and we have been through the first several thousand of those details but we're pretty sure there's some others, so we appreciate these questions because they're very helpful for us to now put those on our list of things we need to get answers to. Rob, let me move now and ask some of our folks to just to sum up a little bit because we're coming up on the hour. I want to be sure we get done. Do you have one more question to ask?

00:52:53

MODERATOR: Yes, I think for the last question comes from Anonymous: Could you please touch on the postponement of fall break and how that will impact, if at all, the pace of course work.

00:53:06

DEAN WILCOX: The reason fall break was eliminated, the university eliminated and we did that at the same time as the university is in part because we're trying to limit the number of times students take off and go home to places that might be hot spots at the time or whatever and get around friends and then come back to campus and create a problem. Spring break, Fall break. Those are all opportunities for that type of problem to arise. The university felt it was wise to eliminate the fall break. It really won't make much difference in your courses except that where you might have had a day off that week on a Thursday or Friday, you will have class and your classes will still end before Thanksgiving and that the exams will begin electronically right after Thanksgiving, which means that if you're going home or whatever you can leave after

the Friday before Thanksgiving and you can stay home and take all of your exams from home. That's what you want to do. You don't have to come back to campus. In fact, you probably won't come back to campus at that point. So that's really all Fall break was designed to do is to ensure that population goes out on long weekends and brings back infections after the long weekend. Thank you for your effort monitoring the questions for us, Rob. Now let me ask our participants and first introduce you all to the new dean, who would become dean of the law school on Saturday morning. He joins us from law firm here in here in Columbia, Nelson Mullins, Riley and Scarborough. He's a former American Bar Association president and I am thrilled that he will be my successor. Dean Hubbard, do you have any comments you would like to offer at the conclusion here?

00:54:51.

DEAN-ELECT HUBBARD: Dean Wilcox, thank you very much. It's certainly an honor to succeed you. You have big shoes to fill but I'm very excited about this prospect. I think all of you on the call today can see how careful and attentive and sensitive your leadership has been to the challenges that are presented by this virus. My hats off to Dean Wilcox for his leadership and all of the folks on the team who have put safety and your education first and foremost. This is a great law school and you have a great opportunity ahead of you. I feel a little bit like a 1L myself starting over coming in with the class of 2023. I look forward to getting to know all of you. It'll be a little more difficult but I'm really excited. I haven't been this excited about something in a long, long time. In addition to getting to know the 1L students and helping you in any way that I want to make sure we also focus on the 2Ls and 3Ls and make sure you're getting the kind of preparation you need to be successful in your career, that we maximize your career opportunities in every way that we can. It really is a great time to become a lawyer. The issues in practice today are as challenging and exciting as I've ever seen them, and this law school is one of the best law schools in the country. As Rob mentioned I served as president of the American Bar Association. I've met lawyers from every law firm or most every law firm in the country certainly. The major law firms and the students that come out of this law school can compete and in many and most circumstances are better than some you get from some other law schools. So you're getting the kind of education you need. I'm excited about helping you maximize your potential. But in closing I really want especially to thank the leadership team led by Dean Wilcox. They have put you first in every way possible and you'll be the beneficiary of their leadership and their dedication to your success. I look forward to being with you next week.

00:57:13

DEAN WILCOX: Thank you, Dean Hubbard. Dean Kuo, You're the academic dean and the dean of diversity and inclusion. Would you like to add a conclusion here?

00:57:22

DEAN KUO: I just want to thank you all for joining us tonight and we look forward to welcoming you or welcoming you back to the law school and this year will be different but we will work to make sure that your opportunities to learn and to participate in the full range of law school experiences is undiminished. And we recognize that you may have individual concerns as the

semester approaches, and I want to assure you that we are here to help. Please reach out to me or Dean Palmer or anyone in the Dean's Suite or Student Services Suite and we will make sure you get the answers you need. So, congratulations, Class of 2023 and welcome class of 2021 and 2022. I'll see you soon. Thank you.

00:58:11

DEAN WILCOX: Thank you, Dean Kuo. Dean Palmer, Are there any final thoughts?

DEAN PALMER: Sure. of course. I'm just echoing what Dean Kuo just said. My colleagues in Career Services and Student Affairs and I are looking forward to welcoming back our 2L and our 3L classes. We missed working with you this spring and summer. We want to hear about your summer experience, whatever form that took. We're also anticipating getting to know the new 1Ls. All of you will meet your Career Services counselors early in the semester as part of your fall semester class called Introduction to the Legal Profession. In the meantime, just as Dean Kuo said, if there's anything we can do for you between today and then call us, email us, shout out on social media. In the meantime, enjoy the last few weeks of summer. Please, please stay safe. We will see you soon. Thanks.

00:58:58

DEAN WILCOX: Thank you. And for 1Ls coming in, the one person on this call you probably know really well, Dean Britton, do you have anything you'd like to add on to the end of the conversation here for us

00:59:11

DEAN BRITTON: Of course I do, and I wanted to start just by saying we can't wait to see all 219 of you. I have Meghan, Ann and Patty here in the office, too. They wanted to hang out just in hopes of getting a glimpse of you, but I'll have to say sometimes the more things change the more they stay the same. And I think we've done a great job of selecting a group of 1Ls that are going to mesh seamlessly with our faculty, with their 2Ls and 3Ls who share a lot of this same characteristics, enthusiasm, adaptability, positivity, positive attitudes, and those are traits that are going to hold you in good stead, not only in law school but in your career search and in your careers. So, we just can't wait to see you here.

01:00:00

DEAN WILCOX: Thank you very much and I will close simply by telling everybody to be assured that we are keeping an eye on conditions. We are aware of numbers as they change. We are aware of statistics, of some that are better than others and some are a little more concerning than others, but we're keeping an eye on conditions just as you are. And be assured that throughout all of this your health and the quality of the education that you get are going to be the two primary concerns that drive every decision we make. Your health, first and foremost, but the quality of education is equally important. You can get more information off of the University COVID web pages and also there's a law school website that you can go to and you can ask us questions and we will get responses back to you if you leave your name. If you wish to do it anonymously, we will try to get a response up on our COVID page, as well. We hope by

middle of next week or so to have a rather comprehensive FAQ page up that will be specific to the law school that will hopefully answer the questions you may not have been able to ask tonight.

So again, we look forward to seeing all of you in a very short period of time. I do encourage you to look into the I Pledge Columbia and take the pledge to do your share because we are all in this together. We're going to get through it together and we're going to get through it because we respect each other, and we take care of each other. And I very much appreciate everybody's commitment to that. With that, we will have a successful semester and we look forward to having everybody here. Thanks for joining us tonight. Send us your questions if we haven't answered them tonight, and we will be sure you have all the information you need. Thank you all very much for joining us goodnight.